

✕ The SONG of

75

Queen ISABELL,

Wife of King Edward the Second,

With the Downfall of the SPENCERS.



To which is added,

SONG, entitled,

What can the Reason be? Johnny is gone
to the Wars.



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A SONG of QUEEN ISABELL,

Wife of King Edward the Second,

With the Downfall of the SPENCERS.

PRoud were the Spencers, and of Condition ill,
All England, and the king likewise,
They ruled at their will ;
And many lords and nobles of the land
Through their occasion lost their lives,
And none did them withstand.

And at the last they did increase much grief
Between the king and Isabel,
His queen and faithful wife ;
So that her life she dreaded wondrous fore,
And cast within her secret thoughts
Some present helps therefore.

Then she requests with countenance grave & sage,
That she to Thomas Becket's tomb
Might go on pilgrimage :
Then being joyful to have the happy chance,

Her son and she took ships with speed,
And sailed into France,

And royally she was received then
By the king, and all the rest

Of peers and noblemen :
And unto him at last she did express
The cause of her arrival there,
Her care and heaviness.

When as her brother her grief did understand,
He gave her leave to gather men

Throughout his famous land,
And made a promise to aid her evermore,
As oft as she should stand in need
Of gold and silver store ;

But when indeed she did require the same,
He was far from doing it,

As when she thither came ;
And did proclaim, whilst matters were so,
That none on pain of death should go
To aid the English queen.

But thro' good hap at last she then decreed
To seek in fruitful Germany

Some succour to this need ;
And to Sir John Hainault then went she,
Who entertain'd this woful queen
With great solemnity.

And with great sorrow to him she then complain'd
Of all her griefs and injuries,

Which she of late sustain'd ;
So that with weeping she dimm'd her princely sight,

The cause whereof did greatly grieve,
That noble courteous knight,

Who made an oath he would her champion be,
And in her quarrel spend his blood,

From wrong to set her free :

And all my friends with whom I may prevail
Shall help for to advance your state,

Whose truth no time shall tell.

And in his promise most faithful he was found,
And many Lords of great account

Were in his voyage bound :

So setting forward with a goodly train,

At length, thro' God's especial grace,

Into England they came.

At Harwich then, when they were ashore,
Of English lords and barons bold,

There came to her great store,

Which did rejoyce the queen's afflicted heart,

That English lords in such sort

Came for to take her part.

When as king Edward thereof did understand,

How that the queen with such a power

Was entered on his land,

And how his nobles were gone to take her part,

He fled from London presently,

Even with a heavy heart,

And with the Spencers unto Bristol did go,

To fortify that gallant town,

Great cost he did bestow,

Leaving behind to govern London town,

The stout bishop of Exeter,
Whose pride was soon pull'd down.

The mayor of London with critizens great store,
The bishop and the Spencers both,
In heart they did abhor;
Therefore they took him without fear or dread,
And at the standard in Cheapside
They smote off his head.

Unto the queen this messuage then they sent,
The city of London was
At her command:

Wherefore the queen with all her company
Did straight to Bristol march amain,
Whereat the king did lie.

Then she besieg'd the city round about,
Threat'ning sharp and cruel death
To those that were so stout,
Wherefore the townsmen, their children and their
Did yield the city to the queen, [wives,
For safety of their lives:

Where was took, the story plain doth tell,
Sir Hugh Spencer, and with him
The earl of Arundel.
This judgment just the nobles did set down,
They should be drawn and hanged both
In sight of Bristol town.

Then was king Edward in the castle there,
And Hugh Spencer still with him,
In dread and deadly fear;
And being prepar'd from thence to sail away,

The winds were found contrary,
They were forc'd to stay.

But at last Sir John Beaumont, knight,
Did bring his sailing ship to shore,
And so did stay their flight :
And so these men were taken speedily,
And brought as prisoners to the queen,
Who did in Bristol lie.

The queen, by counsel of the Lords and barons
To Barkley sent the king, [bold,
There to be kept in hold :
And young Hugh Spencer that did much ill procure
Was to the marshal of the host
Sent unto keeping sure :

And then the queen to Hereford took her way,
With her warlike company,
Which late in Bristol lay :
And here behold how Spencer was
From town to town, even as the queen
To Hereford did pass,

Upon a jade which they by chance had found,
Young Spencer mounted was,
With legs and hands fast bound :
A written paper along as he did go
Upon his head he had to wear,
Which did his treason show.

And to deride this traitor lewd and ill,
Certain men with reeden pipes
Did blow before him still,
Thus was he led along in every place,

While many people did rejoice
To see his strange disgrace.

When unto Hereford our noble queen was come,
She did assemble all the Lords
And knights, both all and some;
And in their presence young Spencer judgment had,
To be both hang'd and quarter'd,
His treasons were so bad.

Then was the king deposed of his crown,
From rule and princely dignity
The Lords did cast him down;
And in his life, his son both wise and sage,
Was crowned king of fair England
At fifteen years of age.

WHAT CAN THE REASON BE?

Johnny is gone to the Wars.

O Dear! what can the reason be?
Dear, dear! what can the reason be?
Ah dear! what can the reason be?
Johnny is gone to the wars.

He's handsome and tall, and his looks they
are comely;
He oftentimes told me he dearly did love
me,

He's forgotten the care of my bonny brown
hair,

And my true love is gone to the wars.

O dear, &c.

I'll dress myself gay in jacker and trowsers,
I'll tie up my hair like a bonny young soldier,
With a cockade in my hat, and my hair I'll
have powder'd,

And I'll follow my love to the wars.

O dear, &c.

I'll go to his captain and boldly I'll enter,
I'll cross the wide ocean and boldly I'll
venture,

It's for my dear Johnny so boldly I'll enter,
And I'll follow my love to the wars.

O dear, &c.

My mind is perplexed, my heart is grieving
To follow my true love I'm sure I am willing.
If I find my Johnny, the damsel reply'd,
He shall tie up my bonny brown hair.

THE END.

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